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MEMORIALS.

Testimony of New Garden Monthly Meeting concerning JOHN P. BALDERSTON, *deceased.*

JOHN P. BALDERSTON was the son of Hugh and Margaret Balderston, and was born in Baltimore, 16th of Tenth month, 1807.

Although his parents were exemplary members of our religious Society, the subject of this memorial passed his youth and early manhood much immersed in the vanities incident to that period of life. His education was a liberal one, especially in the classical and literary department.

About the twenty-first year of his age, he was met with and arrested in his course by a powerful Divine visitation.

It does not appear that this was the result of any instrumental means. He has not, that we find, left any account of it on record; and so careful was he to avoid making private religious convictions the subject of common conversation, that he was not accustomed to speak

of it even to his intimate friends. But, according to the testimony of his family, he was overcome by the reaching, convicting spirit of the Lord Jesus, and overwhelmed with remorse and distress. This visitation occurred during the night season, and he sent for his father, as one whose experience might aid and comfort him at a time when all earthly supports were failing. This visitation appears to have been effectual as it was sudden and powerful.

After this event, an entire change was apparent in his whole course of life. His conversation and conduct illustrated, in a remarkable manner, the Scripture doctrine, "that if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature; old things are passed away, and all things become new, and all things of God." So great was the sense of his past transgressions, that for a time he was much bowed before the Lord, in soul and spirit, until at length his head was lifted up in hope. He was then given to realize that the ways of truth are ways of pleasantness, and all its paths are peace.

In conducting his business he acted with truly Christian uprightness; preaching unto others in the language of example, "follow me as I follow Christ." It was his practice to close his store during meeting hours on week-days,

and he has frequently remarked, he believed he lost nothing by doing so.

Within a few years after he was thus enlisted in Christian discipleship, his mouth was occasionally opened in the religious meetings of Friends; and about the year 1833 he was recommended as a minister of the Gospel. He did not shun the duty of private labor with individuals, when he apprehended such to be called for, whether such labor required encouragement, admonition, or reproof.

He was several times liberated to visit Friends and others, both near home and in distant parts of the country. One of these visits was to New England, and another to Friends and others in New Jersey, in the winter of 1842–3.

In these engagements, it would appear, that he experienced much openness in the service; and, while his path of duty was made clear, he was comforted by evidence of the unity of the Church.

In letters to his wife, he says: "I have been thoroughly impressed, while on this journey, with the awful calling of a minister in our Society. The lesson has been afresh, and deeply taught, that nothing less than a total abnegation of self, and an unmixed reliance upon

Christ, as our qualifier, dictator, and strength, can make a man a worthy ambassador of the Gospel." "I have had renewed evidence in this warfare, there is no weapon to be brought in comparison with that the Lord furnishes. When this has been wielded in simplicity, and with uprightness of purpose, how have I seen the tall cedars (the strong man) bow before the truth."

The causes which went to divide the sentiment of those under the name of Friends, in this and other lands, about this period, deeply grieved his sensitive mind.

In the year 1847 he removed with his wife and family to a farm in Cecil County, Maryland, and subsequently became a member of this Monthly Meeting. There were, some time after this removal, a number of years in which a feeling of spiritual desertion was his portion. During this period he seldom spoke as a minister, and was much guarded in expressing any sentiment about religious matters in private conversation. He moved not while the cloud was upon his tabernacle And when on some occasions he did rise in meeting, it was but to express a few words. He was content to appear as a fool for Christ's sake; to sit as with "his mouth in the dust," until at length, He

who knew the sincerity of his heart, was pleased to say, it "is enough." At this time his health was considerably broken; but his spirit was animated with renewed hope. His tongue was again loosed to speak well of the ever-excellent name of the Lord, and to bid others come and partake of the waters of life freely.

During the last two years of his life, his bodily frailty kept him from much mingling with his friends. Yet such was his love for them, and such his concern that the precious seed might be sown in all hearts, that he was frequently taken to meetings even when far gone in weakness. There, as a messenger plainly on the verge of another world, would he utter (though in feeble accents), the call of his great Master: "Look unto me, and be ye saved, all ye ends of the earth." At length, in the progress of his weakness, it became evident that he would not again be able to go from home. There, as one or another of his friends, from time to time, visited him, his mouth was opened to speak of the goodness and mercy that had followed him all his life, and of the love of God, as displayed in the outward creation, saying, "Transported with the view, I'm lost in wonder, love and praise." Fervent

were his desires that Friends might know an abiding on the Rock foundation, and dwell in the communion of our Heavenly Father's love. These desires extended thence, especially to the rising generation, and to the whole family of man.

On one of these occasions, a few days before his death, he remarked, "I feel like Job, when he said, 'I am full of matter; the Spirit within me constraineth me.' I am nothing; Christ is all. When He condescends to come in as a flood, all that is within me magnifies his holy name. This makes me feel that 'the winter is past, the rain is over and gone, the flowers appear on the earth, the time of the singing of birds is come, and the voice of the turtle is heard in our land.' Oh let me dwell in the lowly valley, where the waters of Shiloh flow. I have no might of my own. All my springs are in thee, my Lord and my Saviour. We dwell in no vain speculations, but can say with the apostle, 'Who hath known the mind of the Lord? or who hath been his counsellor?' 'for of Him, and through Him, and to Him, are all things.' His kingdom within is joy and peace in the Holy Ghost.

"If I may be gathered into the lowest mansion in my Heavenly Father's house, it is all I

ask. Surely we are cared for by the good Hand; surely there is none like unto the God of Jeshurun, who rideth upon the heaven in thy help and in his excellency on the sky.

"'The eternal God is thy refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms.'"

Thus as with a song of triumph, filled with the love, and conscious of the power of Him who had redeemed his soul out of all adversity, did he approach the confines of mortality. He afterward asked an attendant to read to him the first proposition in Barclay's Apology; and then he said, "Friends, these are your first principles; they have their root and abiding place in the everlasting Rock of Ages, fixed as the eternal hills; no man can depart from them and be safe. The mountains may depart, and the hills be removed, but my word goeth forth forever, and my counsels from all generations. My counsels shall stand fast forever, and my purposes and sovereignty be as immutable and fixed as the heavens; ye cannot overthrow them, lest ye be found fighting against God. Oh! righteous Father, the world hath not known thee; but those who are the children of the Most High through the illuminations, the openings of the blessed light, shall understand this. As Daniel the prophet says, 'The

wicked shall do wickedly, and none of the wicked shall understand; but the wise shall understand.'"

He had now become too weak for much utterance, what he said occasionally about his prospects, was but the repetition, in other words, of his own unwavering hopes, and of his concern for the diffusion of the Redeemer's kingdom.

At length, on the morning of the 27th of Fifth month, 1878, after some arrangements for bodily comfort had been attended to, those about him, except his wife, left the room. He lay for some time quietly, then exclaimed with dying lips, "Arise, light has come!" He spoke a few more words, not distinctly heard, but apparently expressive of the beatitude of the state of being upon which he was about to enter. A short time afterwards he quietly ceased to breathe.

"Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints." His redeemed spirit, we reverently believe, has gone to be of that company, who having come out of great tribulation, have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.

His remains were interred at Nottingham, on which occasion a solemn meeting was held.

Testimony of Wilmington Monthly Meeting concerning ELIZABETH STROUD, *deceased.*

OUR beloved friend, Elizabeth Stroud, having been a member of this meeting during the most of her life, and many of us having partaken of the benefit of her religious labors and Christian example, we feel concerned to bear testimony to her worth, and to the excellency of Divine grace, whereby she became what she was; desiring that others may be animated thereby, and encouraged to walk by the same rule.

She was the daughter of Joshua and Martha Stroud; and was born at Stanton, in the State of Delaware, the 27th of Seventh month, 1793.

When she was quite young, her parents removed with their family to Philadelphia, where they resided for several years.

During this period she was placed under the tuition of a valuable female minister, who appears to have noticed in her pupil at that early age, evidences of a tender spirit, which was at times grieved by the thoughtless levity of her companions. She had the advantage, too, of the precepts and example of a pious mother, who was concerned frequently to retire to wait upon the Lord in silence, and to seek his guid-

ance and protection, encouraging her children to a like practice.

Our dear friend early felt the drawing cords of Divine love, and heard the still small voice calling her from the follies and vanities incident to youth; yet when temptation presented, she was at times drawn aside from the narrow way.

After a residence of several years at Stanton, whither the family had returned about the year 1811, they removed to Wilmington.

Near this period, Elizabeth was favored with a renewed visitation of the Holy Spirit; and having felt that godly sorrow which worketh repentance, she was enabled, through the kindness of her Heavenly Father, to take up her cross to those things in which she had gone counter to her convictions of duty, to make covenant with Him, and to become his faithful servant. As she grew in the knowledge of Divine things, she became prepared to take part in the labors of the Church, sharing its burden with her older friends.

Having been faithful in the little, she was made ruler over more. A gift in the ministry of the Gospel was entrusted to her, which was acknowledged by her Monthly Meeting in 1835.

This circumstance was made use of by the enemy of her soul's peace to bring her into

trial. It was suggested that her lonely condition, together with the distance from her Quarterly Meeting, (there being no public conveyance thither), would prevent her attendance there, and thus the cause of Truth would be dishonored. But in this, as in other similar circumstances, she cast all her care upon her Heavenly Father, asking in faith for his help, and was clearly shown that if she was only obedient to what He required, a way would be made where there seemed to be no way. Forty years later she could thankfully acknowledge this promise had been literally fulfilled.

She was endued with no small measure of confidence in the providence of her Lord and Master, her soul being often replenished with the bread and water of life, and her bodily wants supplied, thereby realizing the promise, "No good thing will He withhold from them that walk uprightly." But she was not exempt from trials, both within and without. In common with others of the Lord's servants, Satan still followed her with his temptations, and she was only preserved by keeping on the watch, and fleeing to the Rock of safety. She remarked to a friend, late in life, that though some said they had so trampled "the accuser of the brethren" under their feet, that he had

power to trouble them no longer, she felt that had not been her experience.

But it is believed she received her trials so meekly as to be drawn more and more into communion with Him whom her soul loved, and to know her feet firmly established on the sure foundation, Christ Jesus.

She was diligent in the attendance of her meetings; being an example in this respect to younger and more vigorous persons.

Her public communications were marked by much simplicity, her words being few, but accompanied by life and power, ministering grace to the hearers; and she was often led to encourage her friends to keep near to and to trust in the Lord; believing as they did so, it would be their Heavenly Father's good pleasure to give them the kingdom. In the private exercise of her gift she was careful not to be unfruitful having a word of counsel or encouragement to speak to the inexperienced or to the diffident as occasions presented.

The field of her Gospel labors was mostly confined to the limits of her own Yearly Meeting, having made but few visits beyond them.

Living very near to her Saviour, she was gifted with a spirit of discernment, by which coming events were at times strikingly revealed to her, and she became instrumental in revi-

ing the hopes and strengthening the faith of others.

During the late civil war, when the Confederate army advanced into the southern border of Pennsylvania, great alarm spread over the adjacent country, and the inhabitants of Wilmington being in fearful apprehension of the hostile invasion, a town meeting was called to devise means of defence. At this season of general terror, Elizabeth Stroud's mind was stayed on the name of the Lord, that strong tower into which the righteous run and are safe. She was entirely assured that the invading force would not reach the city, and felt that if it were required of her, she could have gone into the streets and told the people they need not fear.

Having accomplished her days' work in the day-time, old age found her waiting her last call, filled with thankfulness for manifold blessings, and noting the great number of Scripture promises that had been marvellously fulfilled in her experience. Her last days were full of heavenly peace, and she passed quietly away, without apparent suffering of body or conflict of mind, leaving us a full assurance that she has gone to one of those glorious mansions prepared by the Saviour for his followers.

She died the 10th of Third month, 1882, in the eighty-ninth year of her age.

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